France Fights Alcohol Through Educational Methods

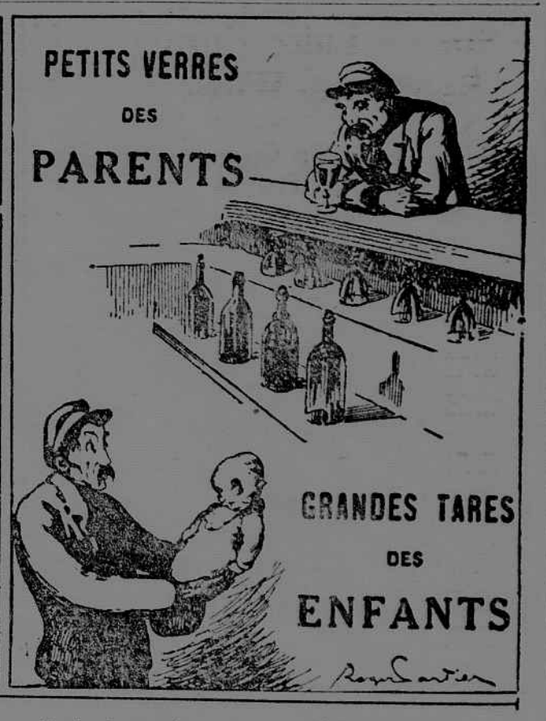
Leader of the Prohibition Movement There Says We Were Stupid in Our Plan and That Reaction Is Certain to Set In—French Seek to Eliminate Powerful, Hard Liquors, but Do Not Strike at Light Wines and Beer — Politicians and Authors Join in Campaign Which Is Centered in Public Schools

As a prohibition cartoonist depicts Moloch in a school pamphlet

A poster that has been widely distributed

Henri Bergson, philosopher, who is a leader in France's anti-alcohol campaign. Above is a cartoon entitled "Alcohol will do what the Germans could not"

In the direction of sorrow—a French poster



Little glasses for parents spell great troubles for children—one of the French posters.

By Wilbur Forrest

PARIS, August 21.

"THE United States will inevitably witness a telling reaction against the kind of prohibition which the government is now trying to enforce," said Jean Finot, noted French author, magazine editor and leader of the anti-alcohol forces of France, in an interview with The Tribune.

"If I may be permitted to say so," continued Finot, "the prohibition system in America is stupid. You can't wash all the spots off the leopard in a single bath. After generations of alcohol you cannot change nature so abruptly as American prohibitionists have tried to do. It is not possible from the psychological point of view. There is momentary triumph, but what about the reaction?"

And, according to M. Finot, it is just as sure that America will eventually get back to light wines and beer as it is sure that the sun is going to keep right on rising and setting for a considerable time to come.

While there has been a flourish of publicity in America's "dry" efforts as in the present campaign in the British Isles, the French campaign against demon rum is perhaps as interesting as any of them, involving as it does a complication of questions ranging from woman suffrage to the rising generation, from the possibility of future wars to politics in the heart of the Chamber and Senate.

The prohibition forces of France involve such names as Alexandre Millerand, President of the Republic; Paul Deschanel, former President;; Raymond Poincaré, former President and Premier and now a leader in the Senate; Henri Bergson, famous author-philosopher and member of the Academy; Léon Bourgeois, President of the Senate; Senator Alexandre Ribot, Academician and former Premier; Mme. Jules Siefried, president of the National Council of French Women; Mme. de Witt Schlumberger, president of the French Union for Woman Suffrage, and a host of others, including Senators, Deputies, former ministers and generals.

All the prohibition forces and the suffrage forces have now joined ranks with an array of influence seldom seen behind any project in France. The prohibitionists are for suffrage and the suffragists are for prohibition, and between the two the l'Alarme is their joint prohibition-suffrage organization, which is out for both reforms—it matters little which comes first. In the opinion of Jean Finot, president of l'Alarme society, both are inevitable, and the ranks are being augmented rapidly by those who see the light. While the well-known French writer is the active president of l'Alarme, Mmes. Millerand, Deschanel and Poincaré are its honorary presidents at the head of a list of names which should make the enemies of votes for women and the advocates of hard liquor tremble in their boots.

Premier Briand is said to have expressed his opinion favorably on the suffrage question, but no sentiment on prohibition has yet emerged from the Quai d'Orsay. Prohibition as known in France does not strike at light wines and beer, the national table beverages. It seeks to eliminate the powerful hard liquors—eau de vie, cognacs, brandies, etc.—which have such a high alcoholic content that their widespread consumption constitutes a menace to the nation, say the anti-alcohol forces.

The modus operandi of the French prohibition campaign is unique. It takes into consideration the national psychology, which favors nothing abrupt. Thus the propaganda goes to the schoolroom, where the children of France may be acquainted with all the brutal facts put forth in a small book, written simply but forcibly, on the most terrible ravages of strong liquor among strong men. Posters depicting a drunken father and a destitute mother and four very destitute children have been "affichéd" throughout France, bearing the names of Raymond Poincaré, president d'honneur, and Jean Finot, president of l'Alarme, which society takes the responsibility for distribution. These posters make an appeal against the death rate at a time when the birth rate is lowest in French history and when the latest national census shows a loss of 2,380,000 inhabitants. Alcohol is charged with much of the situation, inasmuch as the posters warn.

Condition Would Kill Half Of Population in Three Generations

The decrease of births and the terrible mortality of France foreshadows the reduction of the population from forty to twenty million in three generations and to ten millions in six generations. Alcohol has killed since 1870 about nine millions of inhabitants and ruined more than a hundred million. Among other statements the poster appeals:

"Citizens, citizenesses, young people, in the name of the nation in danger, abstain from alcohol and impress upon all this sacred duty."

Meantime, the campaign goes on inside the law-making bodies of France in Paris. Silently and without publicity, the Chamber and Senate have begun, under powerful influence, to tax strong liquors out of existence. On the other hand, taxes on light wines and beer have been steadily lightened in order to wean the Frenchman, who will not have things thrust upon him suddenly, away from the stronger and more fiery draughts. The psychology of the mass is studied in this regard because more than ever with Latin peoples, and especially the French, reason lies in the pocketbook when it will not repose elsewhere.

But perhaps the most subtle and most patient appeal of all against alcohol in France goes out in a small booklet to the school youth of the country. This booklet has now been accepted by the government and within a month will be distributed in the schools. On its cover is seen the figure of a German soldier leering from behind a bottle of strong drink and superimposed over all the familiar skull and crossbones. The caption under this terrifying cartoon is the German speaking: "That which we were unable to do, alcohol will do." There is some plain though simple thought for the youngsters of France in this booklet, which enlists them against the national enemy, M. Finot writes:

"The tragic past of one of my young friends awakes in my memory as I speak of the crafty enemy which attacks the happiness and wellbeing of our dear country. Paul D. was a lovely youngster. Everybody appreciated and loved him. Good looking and solid, he was once the first in his class and champion of football. One predicted for him a brilliant future." And the author described the youth who became a tippler with alcohol. His decline and ruin are described in vivid sentences. The writer continues: "One may count in France the number of deaths from tuberculosis occasioned by alcohol at 100,000 a year. In this figure are found at least 50,000 fathers of families. Counting two infants in each home, there are thus 100,000 orphans in France who each year pay their sad tribute to the miseries and sufferings of 'King Alcohol,' so implacable in his cruelty.

"Even children know that hundreds of thousands of people die anually from alcoholic drinking. Laborers work much less efficiently and produce less under its influence. The bad poison also works for all sorts of crimes. It provokes misery and unhappiness without name. Parents who drink do not cease to quarrel among themselves, and even frequently strike their children without reason. In the place of receiving a morsel of bread or meat, one receives blows and kicks and bad words."

Author Gives Illustration Of Effect Upon Animals

The author described briefly how animals are affected by alcohol; how under its influence even harmless young rabbits and guinea pigs become even more "bête" than men who drink. It is not only the animals which have imbibed alcohol which suffer afterward, but their little ones which pay by sufferings of all kinds for the poison consumed by their fathers and mothers.

The children are given a table to study showing researches of Professor Demme, of Berne, indicating how within twenty families children were affected through alcoholic parents and non-alcoholic parents. Here is his constant appeal for a greater French population. The table shows that fifty children out of sixty-one were normal where parents were non-alcoholic in the case of ten families, as against only ten normal infants out of fifty-seven born to parents who consumed alcohol. Of the sixty-one children born to abstemious parents of ten families only five died at an early age, while of the fifty-seven born to the ten alcoholic families twenty-five died in infancy, seven were imbeciles, five were subject to epilepsy and ten more were not normal and healthy as children should be.

Nansen the Explorer Drinks Nothing but Water

The author invokes the story of Nansen, the explorer, who was asked whether he had ever resorted to alcohol in his experiences with the terrible frigidity. Nansen replied: "If I had taken alcohol I would never have been able to complete my discoveries and would have doubtless died in the land of ice. There is but one means to resist the terrible Arctic colds which reign in the districts where I have been, and that is to drink only water. The strongest animals, and even the dogs who rendered so much service, drink no other liquid."

This unique appeal against strong liquor—a forty-five page booklet—ends with the following admonition:

"Thus down with our great enemy, alcohol! Combat him with energy and heroism in order to prove that you are good citizens of France. And do not forget this:

"Each time that you succeed in diminishing the ravages and the unhappiness that alcohol sows among your friends and comrades you render a service to la patrie as much as if you had fought at the front against the invaders of France.

"The greatest among French patriots—those who have done most before and during the war to assure the victory—have all understood this truth: France has but two large enemies—the Germans and alcohol. We have beaten the Germans, but there remains the other, threatening as each day passes to become more and more redoubtable."

According to M. Finot, statistics for Paris alone show that certain categories of Parisians are extraordinary in their drinking capacity. For example, cooks are the heaviest drinkers, absorbing between ten and fourteen ounces of alcohol a day. Masons are a close second to the "cuisiniers," while carpenters, bricklayers, leather workers and weavers are so close to their working brethren in the proportion of alcoholic consumption that they are almost as active in promoting an industry which employs between four and five million of France's 38,000,000 odd inhabitants. The French barber is also an active drinker, according to the figures, as well as the French store workers. And taking the laboring and professional working classes as a whole, it is estimated roughly that each man consumes from fifty to 130 quarts of pure alcohol a year.

As for light wines and beers and ciders, it would be difficult to find a French family in which these beverages do not form a part of two of the three daily meals.

"The contention that prohibition in France should be 'all or nothing,' as Americans have been able to exercise it, always has been looked upon as suicide to the cause here," M. Finot said. "That would be going too far in this country, and it is undoubtedly true that it was going too far in the United States. Of course Americans are not generally temperate with any kind of alcoholic drink. They have come to Europe and France since your prohibition laws and tried to drink too much. Recently I was in Wiesbaden, where there were scores of Americans, and almost without exception they were making up for lost time.

"My information from America and Americans," continued M. Finot, "is that a tremendous percentage are against the prohibition of the less harmful beverages. That is why I think you have gone too far in America. One cannot change generations of habit in a night. It takes time—years of time—and that is what we are doing here in France. If prohibition of strong drink does not come soon it will eventually come through a campaign of education, a ceaseless propaganda in which we are enlisting even the school children against France's greatest national enemy."

Finot thinks that the methods enlisted by "Pussyfoot" Johnson and others in England are not only a waste of money, but all wrong. There may be immediate results, but "What about the reactions?" he asks. And the reactions, he believes, are sure to come, not only in England, but in the great United States, where the "dry" victory was an immature something built upon an unsolid foundation—at least so far as light wines and beer are concerned.

U. S. Children's Bureau, Monument to Julia Lathrop, Has a New Chief

Miss Grace Abbott, Aid to First Director, Takes the Reins to Send Aid to U. S. Mothers and Infants

By Mason McGuire

WASHINGTON, August 27.

One of the most important jobs in Washington, in so far as the America of the future is concerned, changed hands this week without being marked by the slightest semblance of ceremony.

The bureau of the government whose business it is to guard the welfare of the 40,000,000 children of the country who, as the men and women of the years to come, will decide the course and make the future history of the nation, has a new pilot. Miss Grace Abbott, of Nebraska, took over on Friday from Miss Julia Lathrop the desk of the director of the Children's Bureau of the Department of Labor.

Miss Abbott's inaugural consisted of a handshake and a "best of luck" from the retiring director, who has just rounded out nine years' service in that capacity and resigned to take an extended and much-needed rest at her home in Rockford, Ill.

The new chief, by a remarkable coincidence, also claims the State of Illinois as her home. While she is a native of Nebraska, she has spent the better part of her time as a leader in child welfare work in Chicago. Miss Abbott is a thoroughly energetic and businesslike person. She is paid the highest commendation by the former director, Miss Lathrop, who, with real admiration, declared she has earned the place through sheer ability and merit.

New Director Is Aware Of Magnitude of Job

Miss Abbott has for a number of years been one of the most active coworkers of the bureau. She was for a time executive of the Illinois State Immigration Commission. During the period the child labor act was in operation she was director of the child labor division of the Children's Bureau. Subsequently she was an adviser of the War Labor Policies Board, director of the Chicago League for the Protection of Immigrants and secretary of the Child Welfare Standards Conference.

Upon accepting from Miss Lathrop the desk that has been the center of nine crowded years for the former director, Miss Abbott declared she appreciates in the fullest the magnitude of the job she has taken.

"My job is plainly marked out. The way has been clearly defined by Miss Lathrop, and I shall attempt no innovations, but put in my time endeavoring to measure up to the pace she has set," she said, and then turned to the heap of papers, letters and other matters on her desk.

Under Miss Lathrop's direction the Children's Bureau has had a twofold policy—first, to secure within the field given it by law accurate, reliable and scientific data upon various subjects affecting the welfare of children and child life among all classes of people, and, second, to use all reasonable methods within its power to make available to as large a proportion of the citizens of the country as possible the results of its scientific inquiries.

She has carried out her work with the belief that in the main local initiative and responsibility can remedy any evils, once they are clearly defined and marked out.

"Of course, the bureau's functions have been and will continue to be fundamentally based upon the lines indicated in its creative act, making its primary purpose the business of improving the welfare of all the children of the nation," said Miss Lathrop. "It has not forgotten children needing special care and has made productive, practical studies in these fields. But at the end of eight years its studies justify the statement that, while efforts for special children must be undertaken in the name of humanity, those activities which sustain the whole social fabric and improve the general welfare of children are the measures which promise most for lessening defect, dependency and delinquency."

The Children's Bureau was created by an act of Congress approved April 9, 1912, and began work as soon as its appropriation became available in August. Originally a part of the Department of Commerce and Labor, when that department was divided in March, 1913, it became one of the bureaus of the Department of Labor. For two years its staff consisted of fifteen persons; but, in July, 1914, an additional appropriation made it possible to increase the staff to seventy-six persons.

The establishment of the Children's Bureau was the result of ten years' effort to secure in the Federal government a bureau which should concern itself with inquiries into the welfare of the children of this country. In urging its creation societies and individuals from every part of the country, engaged in all branches of work for the protection of children, joined forces. Among those most active in this effort were persons engaged in work for the protection of children in industry, who felt the need for Federal stimulus in order to extend to all children the more advanced standards adopted in some of the states.

Study of Infant Mortality One of Chief Purposes

To investigate and report on all matters pertaining to the welfare of children and child life among all classes of people is the duty given to the bureau by the organic act. Especially is it directed to study the questions of infant mortality, the birth rate, orphanage, juvenile courts, desertion, dangerous occupations, accidents and diseases of children, employment and legislation affecting children in the various states and territories.

No definition of "child" is given. The Bureau of the Census classifies all under sixteen years of age as "children" and in 1910 reported 31,220,361 children in this country. But the legal privileges and responsibilities of adults, the Children's Bureau contends, are not attained in most states until the age of twenty-one, and physicians testify that the growth and development of the body are not usually completed before that age.

The theory upon which the bureau was founded was that if the Federal government furnished the information, states, local communities and individuals would be enabled to deal more intelligently and sympathetically with the subject and that they would take whatever action might be required.

Challenged by the opinion of experts that the lives of at least one-half of the 300,000 babies under one year of age who die yearly could have been saved, infant mortality was chosen for the bureau's first original investigation. Field studies were made in one community after another as the funds available might permit. In order ultimately to combine these separate small units into a larger study of the social and economic aspects of infant mortality, they were all made upon a uniform plan.

In these infant mortality studies all babies born within a given year were included in order to determine not only the conditions under which infants died, but also the conditions under which they survived. The agents have gone into the homes of the rich and poor alike. The greatest care was taken to make clear that the government does not desire to intrude upon the privacy of family life, but that it asks the cooperation of American mothers in an effort to safeguard the lives of babies. How far the good will of the communities was secured is indicated by the fact that in only fifteen out of more than thirty thousand cases were the agents refused the information.

Poverty and Ignorance Causes of High Mortality

All the infant mortality reports bring out the hazards to the lives of their offspring which individual parents cannot avoid or control, because they are remediable only by community action. A high infant mortality rate appears to be everywhere, coincident with underpaid fathers and overworked and ignorant mothers, the reports show.

Much of the other work of the bureau, during the early years, particularly, grew out of its studies of infant mortality. Thus its first publication was upon the subject of birth registration and was inspired by the fact that its infant mortality studies could be carried on only in those areas where births were accurately recorded. When the bureau began its work only eight states registered births with sufficient care and accuracy to be acceptable to the Bureau of the Census for statistical purposes. In cooperation with the Census Bureau and with women's organizations the Children's Bureau at an early date began an inquiry in many states as to the completeness of birth registration. A constant and persistent effort has been made to educate the general public to an appreciation of the vital importance of birth records.

The bureau early began a series of popular pamphlets on the elementary principles of hygiene as related to mothers and children. No attempt has been made to invade the fields of the medical and nursing professions, but an effort has been made to furnish in a form which the average mother can readily understand the information which every mother should possess.

In a further effort to report to the parents of the nation in clear, popular terms the standards of child welfare worked out by experts the bureau not long after its organization began to prepare exhibits and soon adopted, in connection with its exhibits and also in connection with many of its field investigations, the method of the child health conference. One distinguishing feature of these conferences is the entire absence of any competitive element. Because no contest in which their children might make poor records is involved, parents bring children about whom they feel a special need of advice. The physician in charge of the conference gives no medical prescriptions, however, but refers children in need of medical care to the family physician.

Welfare Work Not Philanthropy, But Important Public Issue

The bureau's studies have revealed, however, that public instruction is not the only method needed to combat infant mortality. Community action is essential and should be based upon the clear recognition that child welfare work is not a philanthropy, but a profoundly important public concern. Accordingly, the bureau has made special studies of the methods used both in this country and other countries to prevent infant mortality.

Early in its work the bureau was forced to recognize the close connection between the welfare of the child and that of the mother. Not only was it found that motherless babies were much more likely to die in infancy than babies who were cared for by their own mothers, but also that motherhood brought with it in this country greater probability of death than in any, except two, of fifteen foreign countries. Although these deaths are largely preventable, the maternal mortality rate has not been decreased as have the death rates from other preventable causes, such as tuberculosis and typhoid fever.

Infant and maternal deaths are less frequent in rural than in urban communities. Nevertheless, letters received by the bureau showed that in many country districts fresh air and wholesome surroundings were often overbalanced by isolation, low incomes and lack of medical and hospital facilities.

Big Educational Plan For Mothers Is Prepared

A study was made of the methods used in all foreign countries to assist mothers at the trying period of childbearing, and as a result of the accumulated experience and information available in the bureau a plan was prepared for the public protection of maternity and infancy with Federal aid. The program proposed includes instruction in hygiene for mothers and children through school, university and extension teaching; the provision of public health nurses, who shall be as available for instruction and service as public school teachers, child-health conferences, adequate confinement care and convenient hospital facilities.

The creative act specifically requires the study of laws, and as soon as the bureau was able to undertake the matter, work was begun upon an index and analysis of all legislation pertaining to children in the various states and territories. This elaborate and painstaking study has now been made of the laws of the majority of the states, and copies have been furnished upon request to commissions and individuals working upon the codification of children's laws.

From the outset the bureau has taken as its province the interests of all children—of normal children as well as abnormal. The problems of dependent, defective, neglected and delinquent children and the methods of caring for them have from the beginning, however, received special attention. Service to handicapped children has been recognized as an aid in laying the foundation for service to normal children.

As a result of its work in the field of child dependency the bureau has issued a compilation of mothers' pension laws in this country and in certain foreign countries.

The problem of illegitimacy has been studied, both in the office and in the field, and a report on its social aspects has been published.

Special Study Is Made Of Juvenile Delinquency

Various phases of juvenile delinquency have been studied, particularly the treatment of children brought before the courts. In this case, as in the matter of birth registration, the studies conducted by the bureau—especially one of juvenile delinquency in rural New York—have shown that the best law will fail in its purpose unless it is given wise and efficient enforcement. Even in large cities, where special provision easily can be made for the proper care and protection of juvenile delinquents, the administrative difficulties are great, and in remote counties of the same state every facility for such care and protection may be lacking.

A report on children before the courts in Connecticut has been followed by a questionnaire study of all the courts of the United States hearing children's cases.

The first work upon the subject of child labor undertaken by the bureau was a compilation and analysis of the laws in force in all the states and other political divisions of the United States. This compilation was requested by several organizations interested in the problems of the child in industry.

As in the case of all legislation, however, the enactment of legal standards for work is only the beginning of the actual protection of the child. The bureau soon recognized that in order to discover to just what extent children were actually protected from too early and too long and heavy labor it must study the methods of administration of child labor laws. The most important feature of this administration is the employment certificate system, and, accordingly, a series of studies were made by bureau agents in several states selected to show the workings of various types of employment-certificate systems in large and small communities.

War Spurs Activity in Collection of Information

The entrance of the United States into the war affected at once the bureau's activities. By that time a considerable mass of information was available, bearing upon the special dangers to the children of the various European nations in war time. Immediately upon the declaration of war by the United States a special corps of translators and readers was set to work by the bureau to make this information available to the American people.

Soon after the declaration of war the bureau also put forward a brief war-time program in which it attempted to embody the pressing essentials of reasonable child welfare standards. This program was condensed under four heads: (1) Public protection of maternity and infancy; (2) provisions to enable mothers of older children to afford the home comfort and protection which are the best safeguards against delinquency; (3) enforcement of child labor laws and full schooling for all chidren of school age, and (4) recreation for children and

Staff of 15 Grows to 76 and Great Network of Service Extends to Most Remote Regions of Nation

youth, abundant, decent, protected from any form of exploitation.

During the second year of the United States's participation in the war the bureau attempted, with the cooperation of the woman's committee of the Council of National Defense and its local child welfare committees, to focus the attention of the entire country on this program. In 1916, and again in 1917, the bureau had cooperated with the General Federation of Women's Clubs in a nation-wide "baby week campaign." The entire year, beginning April, 1918, was designated "children's year." It had the special indorsement of the President. During the year the attempt was made to impress upon the people of this country the needs of children of all ages.

Children's year opened with a campaign for the prevention of infant mortality and a weighing and measuring test, in which records were made of 2,000,000 children. After consultation with anthropologists, statisticians and pediatrists, some 200,000 of these records have been tabulated. This was followed by a recreation drive, which culminated in a patriotic play week in the autumn of 1918. The third feature of children's year was a back to school drive, designed to decrease child labor. Eleven million women took part in the children's year campaigns.

The international conference on child welfare had a permanent purpose. The aim of this conference, which was attended by delegates from Engalnd, France, Belgium, Japan, Serbia and Italy, as well as by the leading authorities on child life in this country, was to set forth by a consensus of expert opinion minimum standards requisite for child welfare, whether in times of war or of peace. The minimum standards finally adopted cover public protection of the health of mothers and of children of all ages, regulations for the safeguarding of children entering employment, and provisions relating to children in need of special care.

During the eight years of its existence the bureau has extended an information service to thousands of persons, many of them representing agencies and organizations reaching other thousands.